

1 Samuel 18 - Thursday, April 24th, 2014

- Last week, we left little David miraculously slaying Goliath and in so doing, God delivered the Israelites out of the hands of the Philistines.
- As you might imagine, the news of what David had done would have spread quite rapidly, which would result in making him Israel's hero.
- We now pick it up with David speaking to Saul, who, as we're about to see, will not let him go back to his father's house because of this.

(1) Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. - So right out of the shoot here, I'm going to make a couple of assumptions, the first of which is that Jonathan was a part of this conversation. - The reason I'm assuming this is upon finishing his conversation with Saul, we're immediately told, "Jonathan was knit to the soul of David." - Jonathan recognized in David by the Holy Spirit a kindred spirit of sorts such that he too possessed David's heart and courage for the Lord.

- In 1 Samuel chapter 14 we were introduced to this Jonathan and his bravery when he defeated the Philistine's in the Miracle at Michmash.
- It's for this reason that this friendship should come as no surprise given that both David and Jonathan were so similar in so many ways.
- Chief amongst them being their courage for the Lord, which came vis-à-vis their great faith in the Lord, and their relationship with the Lord.

- As we'll soon see, this is just the beginning of a friendship that by any standards would arguably be the best model given to us in scripture.
- By that I mean David and Jonathan can rise from the pages of scripture as an example to us of what a godly comradery actually looks like.
- Truth be known, David's need Jonathan's, and Jonathan's need David's, those who are of a kindred spirit, of one mind and of one accord.

(2) Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. (3) Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. (4) And Jonathan took off the robe that *was* on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is the astounding act of Jonathan giving his royal robe and armor to David.
- I say astounding because, Jonathan is not only himself a hero in the eyes of Israel; he's also heir apparent as king to the throne of Israel.
- One would imagine David a competitor of Jonathan, and a threat to Jonathan, which makes this act of giving this to David so astonishing.

Of this one commentator writes, Jonathan could have felt threatened by Israel's new hero, but instead, 'the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.' This says much about Jonathan's character. Jonathan is for God and for God's people, so he is drawn to those with a similar faith and commitment. ...On a practical level, Jonathan is the friend we would all wish to have and be. Unselfish in his actions and motives, Jonathan gives and initiates relationship. Though he has the most to lose (humanly speaking), he humbly recognizes one on whom the Spirit of God has fallen. So rather than viewing David as a threat to oppose, he welcomes him as a brother. In his eyes, David is not a competitor but a co-laborer, sharing the same faith and values in the common cause of advancing the kingdom. If only all of God's people had such a magnanimous outlook toward their fellow laborers in the kingdom.

(5) So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. (6) Now it had happened as they were coming *home*, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. (7) So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." (8) Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but the kingdom?" (9) So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

- Well, it would appear we now have a big problem on our hands, by way of Saul's envious anger toward an innocent and submissive David.
- By that I mean, David is no threat to Saul by virtue of verse five where it says David went out wherever Saul sent him and behaved wisely.
- In other words, David had demonstrated that though he was anointed to become the next king of Israel, he wouldn't do it by his own hands.

Charles Spurgeon - "Envy, first born of hell, whom wilt thou not assail! The modest behavior of David ought to have protected him from Saul's bitterness. We need not wonder that the old mania came back to Saul. He who admits an evil temper into his heart, must not marvel if a melancholy spirit enters with it to haunt the chambers of his soul."

Another commentator said it this way, "He gave way to that devilish vice of envy, which was henceforth as a fire in his bosom, as a worm continually gnawing upon his entrails . . . He looked upon him with an evil eye: prying into all his actions, and making the worst of everything"

Proverbs 14:30 NIV A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

Proverbs 27:4 NIV Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

James 3:16 NIV For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

Philippians 2:3-4 NIV Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. (4) Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- Notice the stark contrast between king Saul and his son Jonathan. Saul knows the kingdom will be given to another, yet he tries to keep it.
- Conversely, Jonathan knows he's the rightful successor to the throne, yet he is willing to relinquish it to another, whom God has anointed.
- Moreover, Saul is riddled with envy and jealousy whereas Jonathan is filled with love and humility, which is why he relinquishes the throne.

One commentator said it best this way, "If the issue of 'who will be the next king?' were not settled in the hearts of Jonathan and David, they could never have had this kind of close love and friendship. They loved each other more than the throne of Israel because they loved the LORD more than the throne of Israel."

- Simply put, neither Jonathan nor David ever concerned with who got the credit, their only concern was that only the Lord received the glory.
- Of this jealousy over who gets the credit, one aptly said, "it's amazing what can get accomplished when nobody cares who gets the credit."
- I think of pastor's, who in this regard, are chief of sinners of which I am one who place great emphasis on ten thousands or only thousands.

- The pastor, who has only thousands, is envious of the pastor with ten's of thousand's and as such, he competes with them out of jealousy.
- However, if they are a David or a Jonathan, they're rejoicing in the thousand's upon thousand's who've been won for the Kingdom of God.
- It's a rare Christian who's so secure in whom God has called them to be they care not who has many, only that they're faithful with the few.

(10) And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played *music* with his hand, as at other times; but *there was* a spear in Saul's hand.

- At first read this can seem somewhat confusing by virtue of how we're told that Saul prophesied when the distressing spirit came upon him.
- Actually, the word "prophesied" is a poor translation, and a better rendering would be babbling, in that, Saul was beginning to lose his mind.
- I can't help but think that Saul's guilt of holding onto a throne he'd lost, and his evil jealousy of David, is now starting to take it's toll on him.

- Then, on the other side of this coin, you have the antithesis, David, to whom the throne belongs, and of whom all the accolades are upon.
- One would imagine him expediting the inevitable especially in light of Saul's attempt at murdering him, which we see in the very next verse.
- To imagine this of David is to not know who is David. David is humble in heart after God's heart thus fame and fortune won't go to his head.

Proverbs 27:21 NIV The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but man is tested by the praise he receives.

(11) And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.

- Couple of thoughts here that I would like to point out, the first of which is that we're told David escaped Saul's spear not once but two times.
- I point this out because, it seemingly indicates, David not only didn't throw the spear back at Saul, but he would go back and play for Saul.
- I would suggest that David throwing the spear back at Saul would be the worst thing he could have done, and we don't want him to do this.

To explain why, I'll share a quote from a book in my library titled, "Tale of Three Kings," by Gene Edwards. Here's what He writes, "In doing this small feat of returning thrown spears, you will prove many things. You are courageous. You stand for the right. You boldly stand against the wrong. You are tough and can't be pushed around. You will not stand for injustice or unfair treatment. You are the defender of the faith, the keeper of the flame, detector of all heresy. You will not be wronged. All of these attributes then combine to prove that you are also obviously a candidate for kingship. Yes, perhaps you are the Lord's anointed. *After the order of King Saul.*"

- A second thought is concerning why Saul missed, "pinning David to the wall," which shows premeditation. I believe God protected David.
- You probably already know where I'm going with this, so suffice it to say, the righteous can be assured of God's divine hand of protection.
- To me, this explains why it is David would even go back a second time and play music for Saul after he just tried to kill him with his spear.
- Namely, David knew that God had a call on him; a plan for him and that God was not through with him explaining the bold response by him.

Proverbs 28:1 NIV The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.

(12) Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul.

- Call me silly, but the question is, shouldn't verse twelve say David was afraid of Saul, instead of, Saul was afraid of David? Answer, "no."
- Reason, because the Lord was with David, but the Lord had departed from Saul, which by the way speaks to the enemy's spiritual attack.
- More specifically, the enemy is more afraid of us than we should ever be of him. God will protect us as targets from the spear of the enemy.

Proverbs 26:2 NIV Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest.

(13) Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. (14) And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD *was* with him. (15) Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. (16) But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them. (17) Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife. Only be valiant for me, and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him." (18) So David said to Saul, "Who *am* I, and what *is* my life *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" (19) But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.

- Well, we see the plot thickening as it relates to Saul's evil plan to murder David by sending him to the front lines as Saul's military captain.
- If this weren't evil enough, he's setting David up by giving him his daughter in marriage knowing David would not have enough of a dowry.
- Furthermore, he knows that David will do whatever Saul asks of him, and as we'll see next, he will even exploit the love Michal has for him.

(20) Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. (21) So Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You shall be my son-in-law today." (22) And Saul commanded his servants, "Communicate with David secretly, and say, 'Look, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.'" (23) So Saul's servants spoke those words in the hearing of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you *a* light *thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I *am* a poor and lightly esteemed man?" (24) And the servants of Saul told him, saying, "In this manner David spoke."

- I find it interesting that Saul is capitalizing on every opportunity to figure out a way of having him killed as evidenced by his daughter Michal.
- By that I mean, in spite of Saul's evil plot to kill David being thwarted at every turn he tenaciously and continuously seeks other opportunity.
- One has suggested the reason Saul offers Michal instead of Merab, is his failed plan to get David to retaliate when he gives her to another.

F.B. Meyer - "Saul treacherously withdrew the offer as the time of nuptials approached - the intention being to arouse his ardent spirit to retaliate, and so become liable to the charge of treason. But all his efforts failed to arouse even a transient impulse for revenge."

(25) Then Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king does not desire any dowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.' " But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. (26) So when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to become the king's son-in-law. Now the days had not expired; (27) therefore David arose and went, he and his men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife. (28) Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; (29) and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. (30) Then the princes of the Philistines went out *to war*. And so it was, whenever they went out, *that* David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

- We bring the chapter to an end but not before Saul's sick plan backfires again by David becoming highly esteemed after getting this dowry.
- What I find interesting is David shouldn't have to pay a dowry for Saul's daughter because it was part of the reward for slaying one Goliath.
- But God, instead of David's certain death while attempting the putting to death of 200 Philistines, which he'd have to do, God enables him.